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Welcome, then, to Massachusetts, your Massachusetts. We proffer you the freshest of salt sea air, with an East wind or two, for good measure, the freedom of our rugged rocks as well as of our busy towns and cities. May the days be filled with wholesome counsel, with friendly confer-

ence, with full refreshment. Breathe deep, as you greet the sea breezes, and forget not the bayberry, and the sweet fern and the wild roses.

The hearts of Massachusetts are open to you. We are glad and proud to have you with us.

LIBRARIES AND THE NATION

BY HORACE MANN TOWNER

A Summary

The most important work in which a democracy can engage is the education of its citizens. A free government implies free choice and a nation can be wisely governed only when it is intelligently governed.

At first the public school was not considered as a proper governmental activity. Each man was supposed to educate his own children at his own expense, but it was soon found that an illiterate was both a burden and a menace to the community and to the state. The result was the establishment of public schools supported by general taxation.

A part, and a necessary part, of the education of the people are public libraries. The same reasons which justify the support of free public schools by general taxation justify the establishment and support of free public libraries. They, like the schools, are necessary to the securing of an intelligent citizenship. In a measure the development of public libraries in the United States has been like that of the public schools. First came the establishment of private and college libraries, then followed free public libraries supported by general taxation. It has come to be generally recognized that libraries are part of the educational system, and that library service should be given to every community as a part of such a system. This recognition has not yet developed into anything like its full requirement. Free public libraries should be furnished for young and old alike in every community in the

nation. With full recognition of the necessity in the United States of an educated citizenship and of the necessity of school and library service to secure such a result some of the difficulties in our present system may be considered.

Despite the development of our public school system and the large increase in the number of public libraries, the amount of illiteracy in the United States is not only disgraceful but dangerous. Upon our entrance as a participant in the late war we enacted a compulsory service act. Under its provisions young men between the ages of twenty-one and thirty-one were required to register and submit to an examination as to their qualifications for service. According to the Surgeon General's statement about twenty-five per cent were found illiterate. They could not read a newspaper or the written or printed order or the signs about the camps. They could not write a letter home or read one if received. This, of course, constitutes an obvious and certainly dangerous condition. The nation's defense is doubly impaired both because of the fact that one-fourth of our citizenship is disqualified from service because of ignorance, and second because in a free country its safety is jeopardized when a large proportion of its voters cannot read the ballots they cast and only know how to vote as they are told.

Closely connected with the talk of removing illiteracy is the Americanization of immigrants. The importance of this and the

inadequacy of the work so far accomplished was made apparent during the late war. We have now about fifteen millions foreign population in the United States and a very large proportion of these are either partially or totally unacquainted with our language and with our institutions. This makes them the ready dupes of the designing trouble-makers and enemies of our government. The problem of Americanization is mainly an educational problem. It is admittedly a difficult problem and one that has so far been hardly attempted.

Another serious deficiency is the want of physical education in the United States. Out of the 2,400,000 young men examined for service 700,000, or nearly one-third, were found physically defective. It is stated that ninety per cent of these disabilities could have been prevented by the application of ordinary rules of sanitation and hygiene. We should put into the daily life of every child the knowledge of fundamental principles of healthy living and these should be made part of the school work everywhere.

Another and very serious difficulty confronts both the schools and the libraries because of the inadequate compensation paid teachers and librarians. Thousands of schools have been closed for want of teachers. Three hundred thousand out of the 700,000 teachers in the United States have no professional training whatever for their work. Many libraries are in the hands of librarians without any technical training whatever. The principal cause of this is that teachers and librarians are paid less wages than are paid in any other occupation.

In order to remedy existing conditions and to meet fully the demand for a greater effort to strengthen and enlarge the educational activities of the nation it will need the combined effort of the nation, the state and the community. Every adult born in America should at least receive a common school education. And it is a national problem as well as a state and local problem to meet these requirements. The national government has never given full recog-

nition to education. In fact, it is almost the only nation of the world which has not made education one of the primary departments of the government with its head a member of the cabinet of ministry. We should create a department of education with a secretary in the president's cabinet. Besides the national government should make appropriations from the national treasury to aid and encourage the states to meet the demand of the present emergency. It is manifest that such stimulation and aid is greatly needed.

I need not say that in this great department there should and must be a bureau of libraries, which, by research, organization and librarianship, shall increase the number, strengthen the activities, and enlarge the influence of all the libraries of the United States.

It is a regrettable fact, and one which discredits our conduct of the government, that nowhere in the government, even in subordinate place, is there any recognition of the great work that the libraries of the nation are doing. It must not be allowed to continue. As an integral part, a most important part of the education of the people for citizenship, the library has a place, and it should and must receive the recognition which it deserves.

It is objected that to create a department of education will transfer the control of education from the states to the nation. This objection is not valid. We have created a Department of Labor but the national government makes no effort to control labor. We have created a Department of Agriculture but the nation makes no effort to control agriculture through this department. The Department of Education may aid and encourage the states without in any manner controlling them and this should be done.

It is urged that the stronger states should not be called upon to aid the weaker states who ought to educate their own children. It is a sufficient answer to this objection to say that if the nation has such an interest in the education of the people of all the states as to warrant appropria-

tions for that purpose then such action is justified. It is certainly apparent that the nation has a vital and immediate interest in the intelligence and health of every citizen of every state.

The cost to the government is urged against additional appropriations. It must be admitted that it is always necessary in considering the claims for appropriations to select those which are the most needed and most important. There is nothing in our scheme of government more important than the education of the public. Whatever else may be left out, education can not be excluded. To the credit of the people, it may be said that the one thing that justifies a tax, in their judgment, is that which

strengthens and supports our public schools and our public libraries.

If illiteracy is a national peril, if ignorance of our language and institutions is a source of danger, if unjustifiable inequalities of educational opportunities exist in our land, if our young men called to the service are incapacitated because of their ignorance of the ordinary rules of health, if schools are being closed and libraries are prevented from being built for want of teachers and librarians and almost one-half are in the hands of incompetent teachers and librarians, then it can fairly be claimed that national aid for education is justified and necessary.

THE PUBLIC LIBRARIES AND THE SPECIAL LIBRARIES

BY CHARLES F. D. BELDEN, *Librarian, Public Library, Boston, Massachusetts*

A not undeserving citizen of Boston, who by no stretch of the imagination could be dubbed "worthy," on seeing the notice of a centennial exhibit held of late at the Public Library of that city in honor of a great poet, enquired "What are Keats?" As we approach the subject before us may we be spared so complete and refreshing an ignorance as this, yet it is not so very long ago that the public and even some librarians were not only asking what "Special Libraries" were, but were also seeking knowledge as to their "why and wherefore." The old-timers quickly become accustomed to the newtimers, and Special Libraries exist today as a matter of course and their present importance in the commercial world is unquestioned.

These libraries arose out of the immediate call of business for certain facts and specific information quite often not readily available in public libraries. The truth of it is that these special libraries are mainly an outgrowth of commercial methods of indexing and filing and the other details of a progressive office, and have little in common with a regular library composed almost wholly of books, pamphlets and pe-

riodicals. They may be compared with the private libraries of some college professors, say of history, who collect an immense array of parts of books and pamphlets, newspaper and magazine articles, and everything bearing on their subject and the minute subdivisions of it. An assemblage of material of this nature, which is highly useful and valuable to one of these professors, has no place on the shelves of a large library, for much of it is of such a nature that the cataloging of it in accordance with the rules of a large library would be well nigh impossible, and certainly would be undesirable. Such a professor has constant recourse to his college library for the standard books he requires, and he thus finds that his special wants are best filled by his own collections, while his general wants are satisfactorily met elsewhere. A general library has its limitations to observe; it must devote itself to treasuring the records of the past, providing for the wants of the present, and having an eye out for the future. The special library's working ideal is to supply the needs of the present, adequately and quickly. Much that is temporarily gathered for ephemeral use may